



BULLETIN

## Nurses' bargaining in high gear

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Talks between the Nurses Bargaining Association (NBA) and the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) for a new collective agreement are in high gear. A second week of intensive discussions between the parties is focused on resolving issues like job security and contracting out, fixing the Pharmacare tie-in, and integrating LPNs fully into the agreement.

HSA's two representatives at the bargaining table continue to advocate strongly for the issues that HSA's RPNs identified as their top priorities: addressing the loss to nurses as a result of the Pharmacare Tie-In agreed to in the last contract, and defending benefits. HSA has remained firm that capping benefits like massage therapy and physiotherapy is not acceptable to RPNs.

HSA has also continued to advocate for recognition of psychiatric nursing as a nursing specialty.

Items of priority for the NBA are addressing the lack of job security for nurses in the community and in long-term care and affiliates, as well as improving the minimal job security in acute care. With the Ministry committed to transitioning as much care delivery as possible from hospitals to the community, it's essential that nursing positions increase in the community.

Another priority for the NBA is negotiating improvements to the flawed Pharmacare tie-in, to restore drug access to a level closer to what nurses enjoyed previously. Full LPN integration is a key demand for the NBA.

This is the most intense push towards a new agreement since bargaining started up again last fall.

The NBA collective agreement expired in March 2014.

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